

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library
Digital Library Collections

This is a PDF of a folder from our textual collections.

Collection: Blackwell, Morton: Files
Folder Title: The Catholic League for Religious and
Civil Rights – Meeting with President 05/13/1983 –
Father Virgil Blum (1 of 4)
Box: 34

To see more digitized collections visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/archives/digital-library>

To see all Ronald Reagan Presidential Library inventories visit:

<https://reaganlibrary.gov/document-collection>

Contact a reference archivist at: reagan.library@nara.gov

Citation Guidelines: <https://reaganlibrary.gov/citing>

National Archives Catalogue: <https://catalog.archives.gov/>

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name BLACKWELL, MORTON: FILES

Withdrawer

KDB 6/7/2010

File Folder THE CATHOLIC LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL RIGHTS - MEETING WITH PRESIDENT 05/13/1983 - FATHER VIRGIL BLUM (1)

FOIA

F09-0043/01

Box Number 9084

STRAUSS, C

8

DOC NO	Doc Type	Document Description	No of Pages	Doc Date	Restrictions
1	NOTES	RE PERSONAL INFORMATION ON ATTENDEES	1	ND	B6

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

~~Mr. Anthony Czajkowski 737-4496
1435 G St NW Suite 852
Wash DC 20005~~

~~Miss Ann Brennan
3001 Veazey Ter NW Apt 622
Wash DC 20008~~

~~Father Peter Stravinski
1901 N. Alden Ave
Suite 3B
Trouton 08618~~

Photos sent 6/14

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 10, 1983

MEETING WITH FATHER VIRGIL BLUM, S.J.

DATE: May 13, 1983
LOCATION: Oval Office
TIME: 2 P.M.

FROM: Faith Ryan Whittlesey

I. PURPOSE

Presentation of the John Paul II Religious Freedom Award to you and a discussion of the pro-life and tuition tax credits efforts of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.

II. BACKGROUND

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is a "grassroots", volunteer, private initiative group with no connection to the "official" Church establishment. The League has 26,000 contributing members and is governed by a largely lay board.

Primarily a civil rights group, like the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai Brith, it stands up for the rights of the co-religionists and against bigotry directed at non-Catholics. Its study of 54 inner city private elementary schools, predominately black and Hispanic, found them providing quality education. Many organizations have used this study in support of tuition tax credits and educational vouchers. The League is celebrating their 10th Anniversary in New York on May 21.

This is the first John Paul II Religious Freedom Award. You are receiving the award in recognition of your active defense of the rights of the unborn child and your strong advocacy for parents' rights for religious freedom in their childrens' education. Others receiving the Award are:
Cardinal Cooke of New York
Congressman Henry Hyde
Mother Angelica (head of a T.V. satellite from Birmingham)
Judge Donald Halstead (a Michigan judge who refused to order
a minor girl to have an abortion)
Pastor Richard John Neuhaus (a Lutheran Minister)

III. PARTICIPANTS

Father Virgil Blum, S.J., President and Founder of the
League
Anthony Czajkowski (pronounced Tchaikovsky) Washington
Chapter President
Ann Brosnan, National Secretary of the League
Father Peter Stravinskis, East Coast Regional Director
of the League

IV. PRESS PLAN

White House Photographer

V. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

2 P.M. You greet your guests and accept the Award.

2:03 Discussion

2:10 Your guests depart

SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS FOR MEETING WITH
FATHER VIRGIL BLUM

- I want to thank you for presenting me with the John Paul II Religious Freedom Award. As one of the first recipients of this award it means a great deal to me and I am very honored to accept it.
- Congratulations on your Tenth Anniversary. The Catholic League has repeatedly demonstrated thoughtful leadership and worked strenuously to strengthen the role of the family in our society and to insure the rights of those with strong spiritual commitment.
- I am very interested in the study The League has conducted on the 54 inner city private elementary schools. As you know, we are working hard for the passage of tuition tax credit legislation.
- Let me also reaffirm my total commitment to support all the pro-life measures before the Congress. We must continue to keep national attention on the need for a solution to the tragedy of abortion on demand.
- Thank you for all your efforts and your continued support.

WITHDRAWAL SHEET

Ronald Reagan Library

Collection Name

BLACKWELL, MORTON: FILES

Withdrawer

KDB 6/7/2010

File Folder

THE CATHOLIC LEAGUE FOR RELIGIOUS AND CIVIL RIGHTS - MEETING WITH PRESIDENT 05/13/1983 - FATHER VIRGIL BLUM (1)

FOIA

F09-0043/01
STRAUSS, C

Box Number

9084

8

<i>DOC Document Type</i>		<i>No of</i>	<i>Doc Date</i>	<i>Restric-</i>
<i>NO Document Description</i>		<i>pages</i>		<i>tions</i>
1	NOTES	1	ND	B6
	RE PERSONAL INFORMATION ON ATTENDEES			

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- B-1 National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- B-2 Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- B-3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- B-4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- B-6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- B-7 Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- B-8 Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- B-9 Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 8, 1983

TO: JAYN STANKOWSKI

FROM: MAISELLE SHORTLEY

Will you please send me one copy
of photo # 13 MY 83 14581 09A
and two copies of #13 MY83 14582 14?

Please send them to me in room 191.

Thank you for your help.

14581-09A For Father
Peter
Stankowski
14582-14 - 1 for file +
1 for Bill Gavins.













CATHOLIC LEAGUE for Religious and Civil Rights

1100 WEST WELLS STREET - MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN 53233
414 289 0170

136141

OFFICERS

- PRESIDENT**
Reverend Virgil C. Blum, S.J.
Professor Emeritus Political
Science Marquette University
- CHAIRMAN**
James Hitchcock
Professor of History St. Louis University
- VICE PRESIDENT**
Emile Comar
Executive Director
Louisiana Catholic Conference
- TREASURER**
John Hansen
Director of Finance
Marquette University
- SECRETARY**
Miss Ann Brosnan
International Economist
Washington, D.C.
- ASSISTANT SECRETARY**
Walter S. Stumpf
Assistant Professor Accounting and
Finance Marquette University

March 23, 1983

Honorable Ronald Reagan
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue
Washington, D.C.

Dear President Reagan:

The Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights is now ten years old. We will celebrate our Tenth Anniversary with a Solemn Pontifical Mass at St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City on May 21, with Bishop Joseph Able Francis the principal celebrant and Bishop John McNicholas as the homilist.

Following the mass, we shall have a reception and dinner at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, with the eminent Catholic layman and coach Don Shula as the principal speaker.

We think the Tenth Anniversary Celebration of the Catholic League is an appropriate time to acknowledge the work of fellow citizens who have contributed greatly to the preservation of our Judeo-Christian Heritage. On this occasion we shall, therefore, present to selected individuals "The John Paul II Religious Freedom Award."

President Reagan, we would be honored to present you with The John Paul II Religious Freedom Award in recognition of your active defense of the right to life of unborn children and of your strong advocacy of the religious freedom rights of parents in the education of their children.

If it were impossible for you personally to accept the award, you might want to designate Mrs. Reagan or another person to accept it in your stead.

I would appreciate your informing me whether you would favor us by accepting this award at our Anniversary Dinner on Saturday, May 21, 7:30 P.M., at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel.

With appreciation.

Sincerely in Christ,

Reverend Virgil C. Blum, S.J.
President

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- James G. Ahler
Associate Professor of Sociology
College of St. Thomas
- John E. Coons, Esq.
Professor of Law, University of
California at Berkeley
- Frank J. Delany, Esq.
Attorney at Law Washington D.C.
- McCarthy DeMere, M.D., J.D.
Professor of Law, Memphis State U.
Professor of Surgery University of
Tennessee Medical Center
- Dale Francis
Editor *The Catholic Standard*
- Most Reverend Joseph Abel Francis S.V.D.
Auxiliary Bishop of Newark, N.J.
- John F. Henning
Executive Secretary Treasurer
California Labor Federation
- Dennis J. Moran, Esq.
Attorney at Law Chicago, Ill. Chairman
Americans United for Life
- Sister Monica Kostelney R.S.M.
Public Affairs Assistant Education
Michigan Catholic Conference
- Mrs. C. Bradford Lundy Jr.
President League of Catholic Women
of Detroit
- Timothy Cardinal Manning D.D., J.C.D.
Archbishop of Los Angeles CA
- Most Reverend Edward A. McCarthy
Archbishop of Miami FL
- Michael Novak
Resident Scholar American Enterprise
Institute Washington, D.C.
- Rev. Msgr. Edward J. O'Donnell
Vicar General, Archdiocese of St. Louis
- Rev. Msgr. Patrick J. O'Neill
Pastor St. Peter & Paul Parish,
Fall River, MA
- James W. Osborne
Retired Industrial Relations Manager,
Stamping Division, Ford Motor Co.
- Aos E. Ryan, M.D.
Flushing (N.Y.) Hospital Emergency
- Frank D. Sales, P.E., Agrupacion
Catolica Universitaria Chief Engineer
Fuller Const. Co. Miami FL
- Most Reverend Robert F. Sanchez
Archbishop of Santa Fe N.M.
- Joseph Sobran
An Editor of *National Review* and *Human
Life Review*
- David J. Young, Esq.
Attorney at Law, Columbus Ohio
- Hon. Clement J. Zablocki
U.S. House of Representatives

Michael Schwartz
Director of Public Affairs

Thomas Patrick Monaghan, Esq.
General Counsel

Orian R. Love
Director of Publications

Reverend Henry W. Casper, S.J.
Director of Development

Reverend Peter M.J. Stravinskis
Regional Director of Development

William J. Sweeney
Associate Regional Director of Development

THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

ANNE HIGGINS
Special Assistant to the
President and Director
of Correspondence
Room 94, x7610

4-21-83

TO: ERIC Ryan

this would be a
very good event to
accept, this group
is very supportive
of the President

R



REGRET
Date 2/14/83 EIB

Religion: An American Freedom

by President Ronald Reagan

The following remarks on religious freedom are excerpted from a transcript of President Ronald Reagan's speech to the National Association of Evangelicals, delivered March 8, 1983, in Orlando, Florida. The League reprints them not to lend partisan political support to a public official who may soon become a candidate for reelection but because the League heartily approves of public statements by any influential leader who speaks out forcefully on behalf of the religious freedom issues in which the League is deeply involved and to which the League is deeply committed: the right of parents to be notified when a government-funded agency gives their minor children contraceptive drugs, the right of religious-minded students not to have their freedom of speech abridged, the right to life, and the right of all citizens not to be subjected to racial, ethnic or religious hatred.

This Administration is motivated by a political philosophy that sees the greatness of America in you, her people, and in your families, churches, neighborhoods, communities—the institutions that foster and nourish values like concern for others and respect for the rule of law under God.

Now I don't have to tell you that this puts us in opposition to, or at least out of step with, a prevailing attitude of many who have turned to a modern-day secularism, discarding the tried and time-tested values upon which our very civilization is based.

No matter how well-intentioned, their value system is radically different from that of most Americans.

And, while they proclaim they are freeing us from superstitions of the past, they have taken upon themselves the job of superintending us by government rule and regulation. Sometimes their voices are louder than ours, but they are not yet a majority.

An example of that vocal superiority is evident in a controversy now going on in Washington. Since I'm involved, I've been waiting to hear from the parents of young America. How far are they will-

ing to go in giving to government their prerogatives as parents?

Let me state the case as briefly and simply as I can. An organization of citizens sincerely motivated and deeply concerned about the increase in illegitimate births and abortions involving girls well below the age of consent estab-

lished clinics nationwide to offer help to these girls and hopefully alleviate this situation.

Again let me say, I do not fault their intent. However, in their well-intentioned effort, these clinics provide advice and birth control drugs and devices to underage girls without the knowledge of their parents.

For some years now, the Federal Government has helped with funds to subsidize these clinics. In providing for this, the Congress decreed that every effort would be made to maximize parental participation. Nevertheless, the drugs and devices are prescribed without getting parental consent or giving notification. Girls termed "sexually active"—that has replaced the word "promiscuous"—are given this help in order to prevent illegitimate birth or abortion.

We have ordered clinics receiving Federal funds to notify the parents such help has been given. One of the nation's leading newspapers has created the term "squeal rule" in editorializing against us, and we are being criticized for violating the privacy of young people. A judge has granted an injunction against en-



President Ronald Reagan

JV panel shows discuss the... read columns pontificating on our error but no one seems to mention morality as playing a part in the subject of sex.

Is all of Judeo-Christian tradition wrong? Are we to believe that something so sacred can be looked upon as a purely physical thing with no potential for emotional and psychological harm? And isn't it the parents' right to give counsel and advice to keep their children from making mistakes that may affect their entire lives?

Many of us in government would like to know what parents think about this intrusion in their family by government. We are going to fight in the courts. The rights of parents and the rights of family take precedence over those of Washington-based bureaucrats and social engineers.

But the fight against parental notification is really only one example of many attempts to water down traditional values and even abrogate the original terms of American democracy. Freedom prospers when religion is vibrant and the rule of law under God acknowledged.

Founding Fathers' intentions

When our Founding Fathers passed the First Amendment, they sought to protect churches from government interference. They never meant to construct a wall of hostility between government and the concept of religious belief itself.

The evidence of this permeates our history and our government: The Declaration of Independence mentions the Supreme Being no less than four times; "In God We Trust" is engraved on our coinage; the Supreme Court opens its proceedings with a religious invocation; and the members of Congress open their sessions with a prayer.

I just happen to believe the school children of the United States are entitled to the same privileges as Supreme Court Justices and Congressmen. Last year, I sent the Congress a constitutional amendment to restore prayer to public schools. This week I am resubmitting that amendment and calling on the Congress to act speedily to pass it.

Let our children pray. Perhaps some of you read recently about the Lubbock school case where a judge actually ruled that it was unconstitutional for a school district to give equal treatment to religious and non-religious student groups, even when the group meetings were held during the students' own time.

The First Amendment never intended to require government to discriminate against religious speech. Senators Denton and Hatfield have proposed legislation in the Congress on the whole ques-

tion. The bill would restore the freedom of religious speech for public school students and I hope the Congress considers these bills quickly. And with your help, I think it's possible we could also get the constitutional amendment through the Congress this year.

More than a decade ago, a Supreme Court decision literally wiped off the books of 50 states statutes protecting the rights of unborn children. "Abortion on demand" now takes the lives of up to one and a half million unborn children a year.

No time to rest

Human life legislation ending this tragedy will someday pass the Congress, and you and I must never rest until it does. Unless and until it can be proven that the unborn child is not a living entity, then its right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness must be protected.

You may remember that when abortion on demand began many, indeed, I'm sure many of you, warned that the practice would lead to a decline in respect for human life, that the philosophical premises used to justify abortion on demand would ultimately be used to justify other attacks on the sacredness of human life, infanticide or mercy killing. Tragically enough, those warnings proved all too true: Only last year a court permitted the death by starvation of a handicapped infant.

I have directed the Health and Human Services Department to make clear to every health care facility in the United States that the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 protects all handicapped persons against discrimination based on handicaps, including infants.

And we have taken the further step of requiring that each and every recipient of Federal funds who provides health care services to infants must post and keep posted in a conspicuous place a notice stating that "discriminatory failure to feed and care for handicapped infants in this facility is prohibited by Federal law." It also lists a 24-hour, toll-free number so that nurses and others may report violations in time to save the infant's life.

In addition, recent legislation introduced in the Congress by Representative Henry Hyde not only increases restrictions on publicly financed abortions; it also addresses this whole problem of infanticide.

I urged Congress to begin hearings and to adopt legislation that will protect the right to life of all children, including the disabled or handicapped.

I'm sure you must get discouraged at times, but there is a great spiritual

tradition of values that have been the bedrock of America's goodness and greatness.

One recent survey by a Washington-based research council concluded that Americans were far more religious than the people of other nations: 95 percent of those surveyed expressed a belief in God and a huge majority believed the Ten Commandments had real meaning for their lives.

Another study has found that an overwhelming majority of Americans disapprove of adultery, teen-age sex, pornography, abortion and hard drugs. And this same study showed a deep reverence for the importance of family ties and religious belief.

I think the items we have discussed here today must be a key part of the nation's political agenda. For the first time the Congress is openly and seriously debating and dealing with the prayer and abortion issues—that's enormous progress right there.

I repeat: America is in the midst of a spiritual awakening and a moral renewal. With your biblical keynote, I say today let "justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream."

A positive view

Now, obviously, much of this new political and social consensus I have talked about is based on a positive view of American history, one that takes pride in our country's accomplishments and record. But we must never forget that no government schemes are going to perfect man; we know that living in this world means dealing with what philosophers would call this phenomenology of evil or, as theologians would put it, the doctrine of sin.

There is sin and evil in the world, and we are enjoined by Scripture and the Lord Jesus to oppose it with all our might. Our nation, too, has a legacy of evil with which it must deal. The glory of this land has been its capacity for transcending the moral evils of our past.

For example, the long struggle of minority citizens for equal rights, once a source of disunity and civil war, is now a point of pride for all Americans. We must never go back.

There is no room for racism, anti-Semitism or other forms of ethnic and racial hatred in this country. I know you have been horrified, as have I, by the resurgence of some hate groups preaching bigotry and prejudice. Use the mighty voice of your pulpits and the powerful standing of your churches to denounce and isolate these hate groups in our midst. The commandment given us is clear and simple: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself."

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 5, 1983

MEMORANDUM FOR DEBBIE HUTTON

FROM MORTON C. BLACKWELL *MB*

This is an excellent group and a good opportunity to have a prominent Administration speaker address a prestigious Catholic group on issues like Central American policy, defense budget and MX. Let's do it. I recommend we send a White House staffer or a Cabinet member.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 3, 1983

MEMORANDUM

TO: BOB SIMS
MORTON BLACKWELL ✓
MORT ALLIN

FROM: DEBBIE HUTTON, Speakers Bureau

SUBJECT: SPEAKERS REQUEST

PLEASE PROVIDE YOUR RECOMMENDATION AND COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING REQUEST UNDER CONSIDERATION:

Event: Celebration of the 10th Anniversary of the Catholic League and Presentation of the John Paul II Religious Freedom Award to the President

Date: May 21, 1983

Location: New York, NY

Background: See attached correspondence. This group would like a representative to accept this award on behalf of the President. In light of the Pastoral Letter issued by the Catholic Bishops, I was not sure if we wanted to try for a high-level surrogate and I would like your suggestions as to who might be the best suited for such an event.

RECOMMEND ACCEPT ___ RECOMMEND WHITE HOUSE STAFF ___

RECOMMEND REGRET ___ RECOMMEND CABINET MEMBER ___

RECOMMEND SUB-CABINET MEMBER ___

COMMENTS:

Your response is needed by: ASAP.

April 28, 1983

COPY

Dear Father Blum:

On behalf of the President, I would like to thank you for inviting him to join you in celebrating the Tenth Anniversary of the Catholic League. He is indeed honored that you have chosen him to be one of the recipients of the John Paul II Religious Freedom Award.

Although he would like to join you, the President's heavy schedule precludes his doing so. With regard to your request for a representative to accept the award in the President's stead, I am forwarding your message to the Speakers Bureau and they will be in touch with you regarding the possibility of a representative.

In the meantime, the President has asked me to express his gratitude for your thoughtfulness in selecting him to receive this award, and he sends his best wishes.

Sincerely,

FREDERICK J. RYAN, JR.
Director, Presidential
Appointments and Scheduling

The Reverend Virgil C. Blum, S.J.
President
Catholic League
1100 West Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53233

cc: Speakers Bureau
Anne Higgins

FJR/emu

~~_____~~
Regret +

Recommend to

Speakers Bureau

E WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

JINS

Special Assistant to the
President and Director
of Correspondence
Room 94, x7610

4-12-83

To: Fred Ryan

a follow-up on my
recommendation
that you consider
the Catholic League's
10th Anniversary Dinner
for the President —
You see how they love
him —

Case



The Catholic League

A decade of defending religious freedom

By Orlan Love
Director of Publications

On May 12, 1973—less than four months after the Supreme Court had legalized abortion on demand in the United States—25 Catholic lay and clerical leaders met in Washington, D.C., to formalize their plans to resist what they rightly regarded as a new American revolution. The Court's abortion decision, coupled with a series of education decisions which discriminated against Catholic school parents, had galvanized those 25 Catholic leaders, dispelling any lingering doubts that their country was indeed in the throes of a revolution bent upon divorcing the laws of man from the laws of God and dismantling, one by one, the Judeo-Christian underpinnings of American society. And, knowing that their Church loomed as the last formidable obstacle to the completion of that revolution, they rightly anticipated that attacks on Catholic beliefs and values, as well as on the rights of all religious-minded citizens, would continue to intensify.

Among those Catholic leaders was one whose depth of experience and vision uniquely qualified him to prescribe an antidote to the crisis facing American Catholics. He was Rev. Virgil C. Blum, S.J., and his prescription was to found the first and only Catholic civil rights and anti-defamation union in American history—the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights.

A Marquette University political scientist and a nationally known Catholic

rights advocate, Father Blum had been years ahead of his contemporaries in identifying religious freedom in education as the lynch pin of all religious freedom. As early as 1953, in his doctoral dissertation on "The Legal Aspects of Equality and Religious Liberty," Father Blum demonstrated that religious exercise in the United States is hamstrung by discriminatory government education funding policies which inhibit the efforts of parents to transmit their religious and moral values to their children.

Freedom campaign

Throughout the 1950's and 60's, in books, articles and lectures, Father Blum had campaigned tirelessly for religious freedom in education, for the right of religious-minded parents to send their children to a church-related school of their choice without having to bear the financial penalty of taxation for public schools, plus tuition for their own children's education. Time and again, he and his colleagues prevailed upon state legislatures to pass favorable programs for funding secular aspects of private education, only to see the fruits of their efforts struck down by the courts. No matter how carefully the legislation had been tailored to conform with court-established tests of constitutionality, the courts always devised new and ever more specious tests to invalidate those

laws.

In the late 1960's, for example, when Pennsylvania lawmakers enacted legislation providing financial aid to private school teachers, they drafted it to conform with the Court's then existing two-pronged test of constitutionality, according to which a law must have a secular legislative purpose and a primary effect which neither advances nor inhibits religion. In order to strike down that Pennsylvania law, the Court added a new, third test, known as the "excessive entanglement" test, which the Court applied both to school administration and education politics. In its 1971 *Lemon v. Kurtzman* decision, the Court said, moreover, that activity by Catholics in advancing aid to private education had "divisive political potential." In what amounted to disenfranchisement of Catholics, the Court said the Constitution forbids such "entanglement" of religion and politics as would be involved in the efforts of Catholic school parents to secure equitable funding of private education. According to the Court, such activity by Catholic parents amounted to "religion intruding into the political arena" causing "division along religious lines," which the Court said was impermissible.

Father Blum finally concluded that the problem arose not from the Constitution but from the historic anti-Catholic bias that still permeates many American institutions, including the courts and the mass media. He realized that

religious freedom in education could never be attained as long as the issue is framed as whether this bishop or that cardinal should be permitted to have his hand in the public till. He realized that the right to life of the unborn child could never be restored as long as the issue is framed as whether the Catholic Church should be permitted to impose its peculiar morality on the rest of society. And he realized that Catholics could never take their place as equal members of American society as long as their most sacred beliefs and values are publicly defamed and ridiculed in the mass media.

League founders

So to counter that historic bias and to safeguard religious freedom rights, Father Blum called 24 Catholic leaders to Washington, and on May 12, 1973, they founded the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. The newly created Board of Directors named Father Blum to serve as president, which he continues to do. David W. Louisell, Boalt Professor of Law at the University of California at Berkeley, was named as the first chairman of the board, and Michigan attorney Stuart Hubbell was named executive director. Of those 24 founding board members, seven remain: Father Blum; Miss Ann Brosnan of Washington, D.C., an international economist who continues to serve as the League's first secretary; Emile Comar, executive director of the Louisiana Catholic Conference and the League's current vice president; Mrs. C. Bradford Lundy of Detroit, president of Citizens for Educational Freedom; veteran Catholic journalist Dale Francis, Ohio attorney David Young and Washington attorney Frank Delaney.

With a first-year budget of \$5,000, Father Blum returned to Milwaukee to begin the Catholic League's work of countering anti-Catholicism and speaking out in defense of religious freedom rights. Through press releases and letters to editors, he and Hubbell called attention to several anti-Catholic and anti-religious publications. Their protests resulted in the cancellation of advertising in the *National Lampoon* after the magazine leveled a scathing broadside attack on the Protestant, Catholic and Jewish faiths. Their threat of a lawsuit compelled Xerox Corpora-

tion to stop publication and distribution of a booklet which called for Pope Paul VI to be tried before an international tribunal for crimes against humanity. And their protests helped persuade 39 CBS-TV affiliates to drop scheduled reruns of the "Maude" pro-abortion episode.

The early efforts of the League apparently struck a responsive chord in the American Catholic community; for, after a concerted membership recruitment effort, the League gained 6,000 members during its first year of existence. To apprise those new members of League activities, Father Blum inaugurated the *Catholic League Newsletter*, which has gradually earned a reputation as a source of reliable information on anti-Catholicism and religious freedom issues.

Thus firmly rooted, the League turned its widening attention to civil rights. In its first legal case, the League helped defend the freedom of speech rights of a Protestant physician, Dr. Frank Bolles of Boulder, Colorado. For sending pro-life literature through the mails, Dr. Bolles had been charged with violating a state law prohibiting communications that are "likely to harass or cause alarm." With legal research and financial assistance from the Catholic League, Dr. Bolles contested the charge all the way to the Colorado Supreme Court, which ruled that the prosecution of Dr. Bolles violated his right to free speech and unlawfully restricted his full rights of citizenship.

Rights of conscience

In another early legal triumph, the League helped to vindicate the rights of conscience of 28 doctors and nurses who objected to abortion on moral and religious grounds. In upholding a 1974 Kentucky law which guaranteed that doctors and nurses could not be held liable for refusing to take part in abortion, the Sixth Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals, rejecting arguments by the American Civil Liberties Union, agreed with League attorneys who had argued that doctors and nurses have the religious and moral right under the First Amendment to refuse to participate in abortions.

In succeeding years, the abortion issue has remained at the center of many Catholic League legal cases. League attorneys played a vital role in defending the constitutionality of the Hyde

Amendment, which protected pro-life taxpayers' rights of conscience by eliminating almost all federal funding of abortions. And the League has also aided university students who objected to paying for abortions through mandatory assessments for health insurance policies.

When pro-life "sidewalk counselors" were arrested in California for explaining the true nature of abortion to potential clients of abortion clinics, League attorneys successfully defended their First Amendment free speech rights to do so. In another major pro-life case, the League persuaded the Department of Health and Human Services to enforce a provision of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act which will prevent the killing by neglect of handicapped newborns such as "Baby Doe."

Parental rights

In defending the right of parents to protect their children from exploitation by abortionists, League attorneys have urged the Supreme Court to uphold the model abortion regulation law passed by the Akron (Ohio) City Council. And, in the case of the 16,000 aborted fetuses discovered in 1982 in an abandoned shipping container in Los Angeles, the Catholic League has gone to court to defend the right of religious-minded citizens to hold religious burial services for the dead babies, and to prevent the anti-life forces from gaining a public acknowledgment that the dead babies are nothing more than so much garbage to be disposed of without the slightest consideration of their humanity.

In several successful anti-discrimination cases, the League has upheld the right of individuals to hold jobs and earn promotions without being penalized either for their religious beliefs or their ethnic backgrounds. The League has also been instrumental in countering secularist infringements upon the right of individuals to freely exercise their religious beliefs. Thus, in separate cases, League attorneys successfully defended the right of prisoners and senior citizens in publicly funded housing to have weekend Mass and other religious services. And, when the state of Michigan arrested fundamentalist Protestant parents for teaching their children at home without first obtaining state certification to do so, League attorneys vindicated their right to educate their children in a home-school in accordance with their own religious convictions.

Breaking new legal ground in another Michigan case, League attorneys argued in federal court that parents have a right to be notified when a state agency gives their minor children prescription birth control drugs and devices. Though the League lost that case on appeal, the legal theories developed by League

The Catholic League is committed to helping those who harbor anti-Catholicism recognize and free themselves from a bigotry which is beneath their own dignity.

attorneys proved to be the direct forebears of the Reagan Administration's parental notification rule.

The widening scope of the League's civil rights activities coincided with a broadening of the League's base of support. Not only did the League gain thousands of new members and supporters during the 1970's; it also developed a national network of local chapters staffed by talented and dedicated volunteers. The heart of the League's strength is on the Eastern Seaboard, where the League has nine flourishing chapters: Long Island, Manhattan, Westchester, Brooklyn-Queens, Washington, Philadelphia, Connecticut, Massachusetts and Northern New Jersey. The League also has three vigorous chapters in the Midwest—St. Louis, Minnesota and Nebraska—and one each in Southern California and South Florida.

The local chapters have greatly enhanced nearly every phase of the League's operation, but they have been especially effective in augmenting the League's efforts to counter public expressions of anti-Catholic sentiment.

In responding to anti-Catholic defamation, the Catholic League has no recourse to lawbooks and judges, because the laws of libel and slander do not protect a group as large and diverse as the Catholic Church. The League must therefore take its case to the court of public opinion. Unfortunately, the institutions most influential in shaping public opinion—the press, the entertainment media, universities, and government agencies—are also the ones most deeply imbued with what Harvard historian Arthur M. Schlesinger, Sr., called “the deepest bias in the history of the American people”—anti-Catholicism.

Prejudice renounced

A few decades earlier, to their enduring credit, many of those same institutions led society in acknowledging and repudiating its deep-seated and too-often virulent prejudice against blacks and Jews. Racism and anti-Semitism were much less prevalent among the enlightened leaders of public opinion than they were among many other people. So, when blacks and Jews began to protest the prejudice against them, the schools and the media, having no vested interest in perpetuating those prejudices, were free to follow their loftier instincts and to encourage others to do likewise. Such, however, is not the case with anti-Catholicism.

Whereas the press would no longer say, or even imply, that blacks are shiftless or that Jews are avaricious (clearly, to do so would be to indulge in bigotry), the press has no compunction whatsoever in saying that Catholics, as a class, are superstitious, authoritarian, sexually

repressed, undemocratic, unpatriotic, anti-Semitic, genetically inferior, or any of a host of other equally false and defamatory stereotypes.

Why is it that the press, the entertainment media and the universities, the staunchest foes of racism and anti-Semitism, are among the foremost purveyors of anti-Catholicism? The reasons are many, complex and overlapping.

A major reason is self-interest. A large proportion of the practitioners in those fields are avowed secularists who believe that traditional God-centered religions, such as Catholicism, are not only false but harmful. Thus, when religious beliefs impinge upon politics (for example, in the abortion and education freedom issues), secularists regard the objectives sought by religious people as antithetical to the common good. So, in a practical political sense, it behooves secularists to denigrate and discredit religion and, especially, Catholicism, the largest and best-known religion in America.

Distorted image

A corollary of that first reason is that many journalists, script-writers and educators regard religious people as polar opposites of their own enlightened, progressive, objective selves. Consequently, they tend to believe that common anti-Catholic stereotypes accurately describe Catholics.

Moreover, they deny that Catholics are a legitimate, identifiable sub-cultural group, such as blacks or Jews. They believe that Catholics can stop being Catholics any time they want to. All Catholics need to do is relinquish their willful adherence to their patently backward, benighted beliefs. In short, Catholics can end any real or imagined discrimination and prejudice against them simply by ceasing to be dedicated Catholics.

The Catholic League's anti-defamation initiatives have been hampered by the fact that those defaming the Church have so often been the proprietors of or writers for the free press. When it comes to treatment of Catholics, members of the press tend to have a hair trigger. Rather than consider whether derogatory comments about the Church are justified, they make them first, then justify them with appeals to the allegedly absolute freedom of the press. Rather than consider whether free speech should ever be tempered with responsibility or tolerance, they contend (at least, insofar as Catholics are concerned) that free speech is either exercised or subverted. According to the press, to bypass an opportunity to defame Catholics is to succumb to Catholic censorship.

That's what the League has been up against in its anti-defamation efforts during the past decade. Despite numer-

ous Catholic League successes in countering individual instances of defamation, anti-Catholicism remains a potent and respectable force in many quarters of American society. Whenever the League has managed to contain anti-Catholic prejudice in one area, it has popped up in another with renewed vigor. Even so, there is optimism that the Catholic League, with its recent triumph in St. Louis over the bigotry of the play “Sister Mary Ignatius Explains It All For You,” may have finally turned the corner in its efforts to persuade the American people that anti-Catholicism is just as disreputable, just as unfair, and just as undemocratic as racism, anti-Semitism, or any other form of prejudice.

Long before the publicly funded play was scheduled to open in St. Louis, Catholic League activists there, led by League Chairman Professor James Hitchcock, Chapter President Frances Noonan and her predecessor as president, Professor John Dunsford, began to alert the St. Louis community, in a responsible and reasoned manner, to the danger and unfairness of introducing into a tolerant and pluralistic community a play which reviled and ridiculed nearly everything that Catholics believe in and hold sacred.

Bigotry exposed

By the time the play opened in January of 1983, the only segments of the community not publicly aligned with the League were a few ideologue journalists and educators. Joining the League in repudiating the play's bigotry were the Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the local ministerial association, the Knights of Columbus, local public officials, influential state senators and thousands and thousands of fair-minded St. Louisans. Predictably, the officials of two local universities, in the name of absolute free speech, provided a forum for the play; but it got bad reviews and closed early. Through the efforts of the Catholic League, a paradigm of contemporary anti-Catholic bigotry was called to the attention of the decent people of St. Louis. And the League is heartened because those decent people recognized it for what it is and rejected it.

The St. Louis experience reinvigorated the Catholic League's original trust and belief in the basic decency of the American people. As Catholic League Director Michael Novak once said:

If the plain, ordinary people can be so decent, if our neighbors can be so decent, then why in the name of goodness can't the most privileged, the highest educated elites, those who run the newspapers, the

magazines, the television, and the universities? Why can't they be as decent as the American principles we believe in, and as they themselves would like to be?

In its anti-defamation and educational efforts, the Catholic League is committed to helping them recognize and free themselves from a bigotry which is beneath their own dignity.

As the League gained experience and maturity, it began to expand its function as a source of reliable information and original research on religious freedom issues. In 1977 Father Blum initiated a research project designed to shift the focus of the education debate from "the bishop's hand in the public till" to the role of Catholic schools in meeting the educational needs of low-income black and Hispanic families.

Research project

Under Father Blum's direction, League researchers visited 54 inner city private elementary schools in eight major cities to determine the quality of the education offered, the schools' religious and moral orientation, their chances of survival in an inflationary economy, the social and economic characteristics of their clients, and why low-income parents willingly make tremendous personal and financial sacrifices to pay tuition at these schools, when free public schools are readily available.

Thousands of hours went into the preparation of the League's 240-page final report, *Inner City Private Elementary Schools: A Study*, published in 1982 by Marquette University Press. Copies of the report, which documents the achievements of inner city private schools and their growing appeal to low-income, minority families, were distributed to selected members of Congress and the administration, to newspaper and magazine editors, to scholars in the fields of education and sociology, to bishops and Catholic school administrators, and to many other opinion leaders.

Evidence uncovered by the League's pioneering study not only confirmed that Catholic elementary schools do indeed provide their students with high quality education, but also helped to shatter the popular myths that private schools are racist and elitist. Members of the League's staff have been called upon to testify as expert witnesses before committees of both the House and the Senate and to provide research data on inner city private schools to the White House.

In its efforts to focus public attention on the contributions of private schools to the education of disadvantaged youth, the League also produced an award-winning documentary film, *Miracle in the Inner City*, which has been broadcast

on television stations across the country. By demonstrating that private schools truly serve the public interest, the film makes a compelling statement in favor of parental choice in education.

Ripples from the League's inner city research project continue, as the writings and comments of opinion leaders around the nation underscore the fact that Catholic and other private schools are an invaluable alternative to the public schools, an alternative that needs and deserves broad-based public support.

Besides publishing the full report of the inner city education study, the League also inaugurated in 1982 a continuing series of Catholic League publications. Among them were a 72-page summary of the findings of the inner city research project, *Inner City Private Education: A Study*; a 36-page monograph entitled *Pius XII's Defense of Jews and Others: 1944-45*, by Rev. Robert A. Graham, S.J.; a 20-page monograph entitled *Religious Freedom in Education: A Munificent Bequest in a Pauper's Will*, by Father Blum; and a full-length book, *Constitutional Rights and Religious Prejudice: Catholic Education as the Battleground*, by Father Peter Stravinskas, the League's East Coast regional director of development. The League has also produced a 200-page curriculum program entitled *American Catholics: Their Rights and Duties in Society*, which is now being introduced in Catholic high schools around the nation by William Sweeney, the League's associate East Coast regional director.

Educational activities

The League conducts its educational activities through seminars and workshops, as well as through publications. For example, a 1983 workshop on "Catholic-Jewish Relations," in which spokespersons for the American Jewish Committee (AJC) participated, typified the League's continuing efforts to foster interfaith sensitivity, understanding and communication. The League's Father Stravinskas also consults frequently with the AJC's Rabbi Leon Klenicki and other Jewish leaders on matters of mutual concern.

The expanded activities of the Catholic League in recent years are of course a reflection of an expanded staff and an expanded base of support. The League, now with nearly 30,000 members nationwide, has grown steadily since the early days when Father Blum ran it out of a storefront office with part-time secretarial help.

Much of the League's growth is attributable to the efforts of Father Henry Casper, S.J., who, as director of development for the past seven years, has personally persuaded thousands of Catholics to become Catholic League members.

Thousands more have been recruited by Father Peter Stravinskas, the League's East Coast director of development. For the past several years, the League has greatly benefitted from the energy and talents of Father Stravinskas, an accomplished author and lecturer whose organizational skills have not only helped to harness much of the volunteer support that is the very backbone of the League, but which have also been instrumental in the planning and implementation of the Catholic League's 10th anniversary celebration. Also working out of the League's East Coast office in Trenton, N.J., are William Sweeney and Philip Dolan, the League's two associate directors of development.

Headquarters staff

Anchoring the League's headquarters staff in Milwaukee is Director of Public Affairs Michael Schwartz, whose articles, speeches, and radio and television appearances during the past six years have greatly enhanced the League's credibility and visibility. Other key staff members include Director of Publications Orlan Love who for the past five years has overseen production of the *Catholic League Newsletter*, the monthly supplements, League books and pamphlets, and press releases; General Counsel Thomas Patrick Monaghan who directs the League's civil rights activities; Associate General Counsel Steve McDowell and Director of Communications Stephen Settle.

A decade has passed since those 25 Catholic leaders met in Washington to found the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights. Ten years, and abortion is claiming more innocent lives than ever; 10 years, and parents who want a moral and religious education for their children are still being penalized; 10 years, and anti-Catholic prejudice is still a potent and respectable force in American society. But the Catholic League is neither daunted nor discouraged.

As the founder, Father Blum, said 10 years ago, in announcing the formation of the Catholic League:

We intend to employ all the tried and accepted methods effective in an open and free democratic society to impress upon our fellow countrymen who engage in prejudicial conduct that what they are doing is, first of all, unjust and unacceptable under our American system and, further, that it is unprofitable either for the future of society or for individual relationships today.

In that, the Catholic League's resolve grows firmer with each passing day. Sooner or later, the decency of the American people will come to the fore.